

Acts 14:8-28 - February 14, 2020
Outline and Scripture (NLT)

OUTLINE

1. Greet one another, begin with prayer, and read Acts 14:8-28.

2. Remind the class about the events of Acts 13:1 to 14:7.

3. Discuss Paul and Barnabas's healing in Acts 14:8-13.

—No mention of going to the synagogue

—A stunning miracle takes place: Paul heals a man who has never walked

—Paul follows his inclination and the guiding of the Spirit; discerns the man is ready to be healed

—Crowd thinks Paul and Barnabas are Greco-Roman gods come to life: Paul is Hermes (because he does a lot of the talking as the messenger god), and Barnabas is Zeus

—City worships them (“gods in human form!”) and prepares to offer sacrifices to them, as this city considers Zeus its main deity with the temple just outside of town

—Common for cities in the Roman Empire to focus on one of the gods as its special deity

—*What strikes you as interesting in Paul and Barnabas not using their established methodology and going to the synagogue? What does this say about Lystra? About the flexibility of Paul and Barnabas? What can we learn from this?*

—*How are many people in our day confused about who God is? What are helpful ways to provide good information to clear up confusion?*

4. Discuss Paul and Barnabas's response in Acts 14:14-20.

—Tear their clothes (time-honored act of lament) and shout in dismay

—Not gods, but people just like you who have come to bring Good News!

—Preach about God's grace through the only true, living God

—Still difficult to keep the people from offering sacrifices to them

—Then opponents from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, their two previous stops, arrive and persuade the townspeople to attack Paul

—Appearing to be dead, Paul is dragged out of town; as disciples gather around him, he revives and goes with Barnabas (Luke gives few details about what appears to be miraculous recovery)

—*How does God's grace reveal itself to people today? Inside the church? Outside the church? Why is this helpful to know?*

— *The persistent opposition, to the point of people coming from cities in which Paul and Barnabas had previously ministered, had to be discouraging for them. How do you think they coped with their continuing challenges? What can we take from this to help with our own persistent opposition and continuing challenges?*

5. Discuss the continued missionary work in Acts 14:21-28.

— Luke provides a summary report of the continuing work in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch

— Paul and Barnabas return to each city and do two things:

- encourage the believers in the midst of suffering
- appoint elders for each congregation

— Making their way to the coast, they go to Perga and Attalia in the region of Pamphylia (see map, last page of the Teaching Helps)

— Return to Antioch of Syria and give a report, rest, and recuperate for “a long time” (v. 28, NLT) from the rigors of their 1st missionary journey

— “Making disciples is the job of disciples in Acts. Mainline North American Protestantism, faced with steady decline in membership over the most recent decades, tends to waver between superficial techniques for church growth or unconvincing alibis for church death. . . Luke would not know what to make of a church no longer in the business of making more disciples. While the mission of the church is more than growth, it is not something other than growth. It is certainly not decline. We live in the gracious interim for witness (Acts 1:8). In Luke-Acts, any church bold enough to preach the Word, which dares to challenge the cultural status quo, which refuses to accept present political arrangements as eternally given, which is convinced of the truth of its message, which is willing to suffer for the truth will grow. God give growth to such churches.” (William Willimon, *Acts*, p. 127-128)

— *How do Paul and Barnabas support and develop Christians in the churches they started? Why is this support and development necessary? How can we adapt what Paul and Barnabas do for our congregation?*

— *Suffering continues to be an ongoing theme as the church grows in Acts. How is suffering present in your life now? How can we help one another through the suffering we experience?*

6. Close in prayer.

SCRIPTURE (NLT)

Paul and Barnabas in Lystra and Derbe

8 While they were at Lystra, Paul and Barnabas came upon a man with crippled feet. He had been that way from birth, so he had never walked. He was sitting **9** and listening as Paul preached. Looking straight at him, Paul realized he had faith to be healed. **10** So

Paul called to him in a loud voice, “Stand up!” And the man jumped to his feet and started walking.

11 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in their local dialect, “These men are gods in human form!” **12** They decided that Barnabas was the Greek god Zeus and that Paul was Hermes, since he was the chief speaker. **13** Now the temple of Zeus was located just outside the town. So the priest of the temple and the crowd brought bulls and wreaths of flowers to the town gates, and they prepared to offer sacrifices to the apostles.

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard what was happening, they tore their clothing in dismay and ran out among the people, shouting, **15** “Friends,^[a] why are you doing this? We are merely human beings—just like you! We have come to bring you the Good News that you should turn from these worthless things and turn to the living God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them. **16** In the past he permitted all the nations to go their own ways, **17** but he never left them without evidence of himself and his goodness. For instance, he sends you rain and good crops and gives you food and joyful hearts.” **18** But even with these words, Paul and Barnabas could scarcely restrain the people from sacrificing to them.

19 Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. **20** But as the believers^[b] gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.

Paul and Barnabas Return to Antioch of Syria

21 After preaching the Good News in Derbe and making many disciples, Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, **22** where they strengthened the believers. They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that we must suffer many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God. **23** Paul and Barnabas also appointed elders in every church. With prayer and fasting, they turned the elders over to the care of the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. **24** Then they traveled back through Pisidia to Pamphylia. **25** They preached the word in Perga, then went down to Attalia.

26 Finally, they returned by ship to Antioch of Syria, where their journey had begun. The believers there had entrusted them to the grace of God to do the work they had now completed. **27** Upon arriving in Antioch, they called the church together and reported everything God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, too. **28** And they stayed there with the believers for a long time.

Footnotes

^[a]14:15 Greek *Men*.

^[b]14:20 Greek *disciples*; also in [14:22](#), [28](#).